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ABSTRACT

The new information age society demands a new set of new survival skills. Instead of memorizing facts, students should learn how to gather useful information about work and leisure opportunities. The information-gathering skill can be creatively taught around any specific content area. Two areas that can effectively embody this type of instruction include work and leisure search education. Two new curricula emphasize this information search method: Pathways to Leisure and Pathways to Work. Portland State University has implemented a curriculum that integrates work and leisure searches in five area high schools. Graduate students support the high school teacher who chooses the specific transition curriculum. The leisure search introduces the student to self-assessment, surveying opinions, gathering leads, networking, decision making, goal setting, and detailed planning. All of these self-directed hunting skills are taught in three major steps: self-assessment (identification of the target), research (refining and locating the target with the help of local advisors), and connecting to one's target (setting goals and making plans to achieve them). Self-directed behavior is a major program goal, since students are taught how to find information in a systematic and persistent fashion. In an information age, the major survival skill is not getting information, but getting to the right information or knowing the best way to collect information. (YLB)

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*Draft #7*

# LEISURE AND WORK SEARCH

## *Survival Skills for the 21st Century*

**by Martin Kimeldorf**

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**Abstract and Overview**[1]

In the 1990's Americans will once again try to grapple with unpleasant social and economic realities. And if a new social agenda emerges , then I predict that this will lead to a another wave of school reform closely linked to these economic and social conditions. The social and economic realities that we have had to absorb are painful. These changes take many forms. A list for some of the new realities might include:

- Crowded nest syndrome.
- Growth of the under-paid and low-paid occupational service sector.
- Decline in mid-management positions.
- Decline in the size of the middle class.
- Increasing polarization of society into the have's and have-not's.

Since the middle 1970's Americans have experienced a loss of what I call the 3 S's: Salary, Security, Satisfaction. One initial response in the 1980's has been anger directed at the school house. This anger accuses educators of mediocrity without commenting upon the mediocre financial support for education. By not producing new funding, the back-to-basics-people may be viewed more as attackers of contemporary education, rather than viewed as reformers. They have dismantled previous funding and reforms, leaving little in it's wake.

The "reform" is now collapsing upon itself. It has not produced more opportunity for more students. The promises remain empty. Instead, we witness an increase in the number of drop outs in high school. We also see college students unable to gain admittance to the good life while being forced to take jobs un-related to their education. The empty nest syndrome has now been replaced by the crowded nest phenomenon. Young adults return to live with their parents because they are unable to set up their own home on any level above a fringe existence.

Our educational system can no longer guarantee the good life to graduates. We do not control the politics and economics governing the distribution of wealth and opportunity. We can, however, teach people how to more effectively hunt for the existing opportunities. The opportunities most commonly sought will be those found on the work and leisure pathways.

As we search for alternatives and rejuvenation in the 1990's, I believe the anger directed at education will abate. People will again speak of bold new education experiments. This initiative can reflect our vision of the possibilities in the 21st century.

The new purpose of education should focus on the quality of life in a world of shrinking opportunity. Therefore, while many of the *basics* need not change, the overall content must be expanded and applied in real-life situations. We

[1] This essay is adapted from a workshop.

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need courses teaching work and leisure *search* skills.

Because the labor market is so volatile and malleable, it is not logical to base a curriculum or a reform on the predictions for skills needed in a future labor market. Most past predictions about future demands for specific job skills or jobs have missed the mark. (Remember the predicted need for programmers?) Richard Bolles, our foremost thinker about life-career planning, has repeatedly shown how the process of labor market prognostication is heavily flawed with subjectivity, and consequently the predictions are often erroneous in any long term sense.

I believe that the next educational reform must focus on the quality of life as it is shaped by the late 20th Century realities. These realities are reflect a reduction in America's economic and political sphere of influence abroad and a decline in opportunity at hope. The new society will one where the downwardly mobile-bcttom-third replaces the previous middle class majority. This new composition is bound to effect our democratic practices, philosophy, and politics. Some call this new mix the rise of the *post-industrial* or the *information age society*. That is certainly a more pleasant sounding title for an era of declining opportunities.

Yet, even in the so-called information age we operate from old-fashioned perspectives. The back-to-basics people emphasize the mastery of basic facts and skills when these same skills and facts are memorized and manipulated more effectively by micro-chips. If we are to find synchronicity with the new realities, the new age, then we must teach a new set of new survival skills. Instead of memorizing basic facts, it will be more important to know how to gather useful information about work and leisure opportunities.

I agree with Bolles; we cannot accurately predict which job-skills will become essential, and which ones will become obsolete. But, we can predict that the skill of finding or gathering useful information will remain an essential skill.

This information-gathering skill can be creatively taught around any specific content area. Two areas that can effectively embody this type of instruction include work and leisure search education. It is a process centered on the quality of life. The quality of work and leisure time decisions often reflects the quality of information we have about ourselves and our local resources. The ability to gather quality information and use it productively becomes a survival skill in an information saturated society facing a decline in the 3 S's

When work and leisure search education are integrated we all win: vocational educators, academic instructors, and counselors. These subjects share a common set of information seeking and decision making skills. Two new curriculums emphasize this information search method: *Pathways To Leisure* and *Pathways To Work* . This method and these curriculums are the subjects of this paper.

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**What's Your Reaction?**

I would be interested in your reaction to this paper. I am interested in continually revising my concepts with the input of others. I have other essays about this subject matter. Please write to me at: (work) School-Work Transition Project, Special Studies Dept, PO Box 751, Portland Oregon 97207 or (home) 6705 Gold Creek Dr SW, Tumwater, WA 98502.

**Introduction: A New Agenda For A New Century**

Curriculums for a new century should recognize that the searches for meaningful or rewarding work and leisure opportunities can be integrated. These search skills can be used when looking for consumer goods (eg; car, stereo), service providers (health, repair, legal aid), or living needs (housing, travel, etc). The instructional model is based on successful and innovative job hunting teaching practices and includes such things as: networking, lead development, role playing, detailed planning, and follow-up. The curriculums simply re-applies job search methods to a leisure search.

The integration of the work and leisure search education recognizes that we must begin to creatively re-define the "basics in education" in an information age. We can no longer afford to take search skills for granted. In other words, when a student possess the *skill* for wood working this does not insure that he or she will necessarily be able to find an outlet for a woodworking job or leisure pursuit. And as a result , these poorly trained hunters may lead lives based on survival rather than fulfillment. It is time to give the work and leisure search the same weight we give to other vocational, academic, and avocational strands.

Career education in the fullest sense can promote the integration of work and leisure search processes when it recognizes that work and leisure are a related set of experiences. This notion is supported by both work and leisure experts. For example, Godbey (1985) suggests that the distinction between work and leisure may become increasingly blurred in the future. McDaniels (1984) seems to echo the theme of integration when discussing the new work ethic of the non-traditional worker. According to McDaniels these new workers seek not only the traditional job incentives like raises and promotions, but they are also very concerned about their personal disposable time. Many of these non-traditionalists ask for time off instead of asking for a raise. These non-traditional workers are part of the growing legions of part time workers. They are also members of the full time work group, defining new working conditions like flex-time and flex-place workers.

**Field Testing The Theory**

At Portland State University we have been exploring the implementation of a curriculum that integrates work and leisure searches in 5 area high schools (as part of a nationally funded school-to-work transition project). The 5 area high school classrooms are supported by graduate students trained in the job search and leisure search arts. The high school teacher chooses the specific transition curriculum and then team teaches with a graduate student.

The project's pursuit of the integration of work and leisure search rests on the hypothesis that students who master job search skills and then re-use the skills in a leisure search will make more successful transitions. In our first years 73%-80% of the special education students found jobs *on their own*.. Similarly we found that teachers and students felt that their leisure lives could be improved through a leisure search education. When surveyed about leisure, our initial sample revealed that 70% of the students felt that they needed more ideas on what to do and how to find new leisure opportunities.

**What Are The Core Skills In A Work And Leisure Search?**

The best way to describe the core search skills is to show how a typical student might complete workbook exercises in both courses. The leisure search workbook usually precedes the job search workbook. This is because a leisure search involves less rejection and competition. The leisure search introduces the student to self-assessment, surveying opinions, gathering leads, networking, decision making, goal setting and detailed planning. All of these skills could be summarized as self-directed hunting skills. The skills are taught into three major steps: Assessment, Research, and Connection.

These steps are based upon the successful job club model founded in the late 70's. Job club members look for work by participating in a self-help support group. This means that they share in all the experiences. This includes role playing together, sharing rides, sharing job leads. It also includes sharing the experience of surveying employers, phoning for job leads, and interviewing for jobs. It ultimately means sharing in the experience of rejection. Job seekers bring back tales of woe, humor, and success to share in the support group.

*Job Search Education* was the first classroom oriented curriculum based on the job club model. By following the teacher guide and student workbook an instructor can replicate the job club support atmosphere while teaching the most current self-directed job hunting skills. This workbook is used extensively in the PSU project and became a model for the new curriculums *Pathways To Work* and *Pathways To Leisure*. These two books attempt to integrate the work search and leisure search within a semester of instruction. Based on field reviews and requests, the curriculum appears to be of interest to a variety of service providers found in a variety of settings that include schools, therapy residential treatment centers, job specific training programs, group homes and many others..

Perhaps as a result of this interest, we may see not only the beginning of school based job clubs, but also the emergence of leisure search clubs. Ultimately, the goal remains to help students master the skills and confidence associated with self-directed problem solving and decision making. The club atmosphere becomes the interface between classroom and community experiences.

**Step 1: Self-Assessment**

The first step in both *Pathways* workbooks is self assessment. In both the work and leisure programs this involves four stages: brainstorming, recollecting, grouping and prioritizing. These four stages are a proven decision making scenario. The student must first expand his or her notion of options by recalling past satisfying experiences. The past helps identify one's strengths. The fantasy exercises help explore unlimited futures even when students set their own limits. Later limits are applied as one must narrow down all the brainstorming and prioritize the top possibilities. Examples form both the leisure and work program will help illustrate this point.

For example, in the leisure workbook the brainstorm exercises ask the student to create a visual message (collage) that could adequately describe him/herself to beings from a different galaxy. In another exercise, the student makes a fingerprint and then describes what is unique about him/herself. Later, the student keeps a time diary to see how time and money are typically spent. Many of the leisure preferences later become a guide in identifying occupational preferences. Some of the brainstorming exercises in *Pathways To Work* involve recalling past good experiences or compliments, designing ideal job or working conditions, and designing a small business.

All of these exercises help put the student in touch with words that describe his or her interests and past success factors. These words and factors then shape choices for future leisure and work options. Students conclude these exercises by grouping and prioritizing their newly discovered vocabulary of interest and success.

Each assessment step ends by inventorying values, preferences, abilities. These are then matched to specific jobs and leisure activities. Finally, the student is asked to narrow all this down to three options possible job or leisure activities. Perhaps a student has matched an interest in using tools and working alone with the activities of woodworking, jewelry, and plumbing. By choosing three the student is learning to be flexible about life-career decisions. This sends a message that life-career planning is never fixed or forever.

**Step 2: Research**
After conducting an *internal* investigation of values, interests and abilities the student must embark on an *external* investigation. The research in Step 2 helps the student verify the initial choices by helping to determine the realism or validity of the initial three choices. The goal of step two is to collect expert opinion and information about local resources or opportunities. The question at this stage becomes: what do employers or leisure experts think of my choice? This begins the process of learning about networking in order to locate experts and resources.

The research step begins with a simple survey conducted among a familiar network of friends and relatives. The mission is simple at this stage. Ask people you know for suggestions. If one is interested in woodworking then ask, "where do you think I could go to find out more?" or ask, "who do you recommend I talk with?" The skill is presented visually and taught via role playing.

Next, students are asked to contact *switchboard* people. These are people who connect us to information we need. Typical switchboard examples could include people from libraries, parks and recreation departments, lumber yards, career centers, chamber of commerce, etc. Students learn to locate these people in the phone book. This involves learning how to use the phone book and how to conduct an appropriate inquiry. The students call up the switchboard places and conduct a phone survey. The same principles used in tele-marketing are applied . A phone script helps students develop appropriate communication skills. A sample script and survey card from the leisure program are illustrated next:

*PHONE SCRIPT SAMPLE*

**TELL WHO YOU ARE**
Hello, my name is: _____

**TELL WHY YOU ARE CALLING**
I am doing a survey about leisure opportunities in the area of _____.
I have _____ short questions to ask you.

**ASK TO SPEAK TO AN EXPERT**
Could I speak to someone who could give me advice or answer my survey?

**TELL HOW LONG IT WILL TAKE**
It should only take ___ to ____ minutes

**ASK YOUR SURVEY QUESTIONS FROM THE *LEISURE SURVEY CARD***
(shown next)

**THANK THE PERSON**

*LEISURE SURVEY CARD SAMPLE*

Place: _____ Phone Number_____
Contact's Name: _____
Call Back: ❑ Mon ❑ Tue ❑ Wed ❑ Thur ❑ Fri
Time to call back: _____ ❑ AM ❑ PM Date _____

**Questions To Ask**
Do you have any of the following:
❑ brochures ❑ books ❑ classes ❑ catalogs
❑ other information about my leisure topic?
_____

Could I visit your place to see what is available? ❑ Yes ❑ No

Can you recommend another person or place I could call? I want to get more advice on this topic? Person: _____.

How may I contact this person? _____

The students first practice their scripts by role playing with partners. Later, they phone in small teams. Finally, a discussion is held about the experiences with the entire class. This discussion helps to bolster confidence and increase awareness. Generally, there is lots of excitement at this point. In the job search program the survey questions usually concern job qualifications and opportunity. Typically, 20% of the job search students will be asked to come in for an interview simply because they have contacted an employer at an opportune moment.

After this kind of feedback most students are able to refine their top three choices in terms of practicality and interest. To find out more about these work or leisure options a deeper level of information is sought. The next survey probes more deeply as the students move from a phone survey to an in-person survey. The student must now learn to locate a knowledgeable person, make an appointment, and choose appropriate attire. The student is also learning how to meet and communicate confidently with new people. These exercises are typically done in small groups.

In the leisure search program an in-person survey with a wood carver might lead to questions concerning how one gets started, how much time is spent each week, the costs, suggested books or magazines, and the names of clubs to join. In the work search program the questions are about working conditions and employers' expectations. In both instances, the student asks the expert for advice on how to get started or gain access to a new pathway. In the process, the student has come a long ways. He/She has started out rather timid and unsure, networking with friends and relatives. Next, safe-strangers are approached in the switchboard network. Finally, the student seeks out the advice of total strangers.

Learning to network is extremely important. It has been shown in countless studies to be one of the best job search tools. Job seekers who network for leads are more successful than those who rely on advertised openings (eg; want ads, bulletins, etc). In fact, job seekers who expand their network beyond the comfortable group of family and friends have been shown to find better jobs. Mark Granovetter found that job seekers who contact a person they had not seen in over a year earned $2500 a year more than those who asked only family and friends (Wegmann, 1985).

To help develop more sophisticated networking skills job seekers are later shown a more elegant approach to use with strangers. A sample network script is shown below:

*NETWORKING SCRIPT SAMPLE SCRIPT*

Follow these steps in asking for advice. The words in italics are examples.

**Introduce Yourself....**(Especially if they don't remember you)

**Ask for Specific Advice**

**Tell Why You Asked Them**
*I thought you might know about opportunities in the wood working area because you work in a lumber yard.*

**Be Patient...Let the person think**
Give the person a chance. Be silent or describe what you have been doing.
*I've been looking for two months now. I've got more good leads but I'm trying to find a few more.*

Ask For The Names Of 2 More People

Sophisticated networking skills take time to learn, just like any complex academic or vocational skill. The curriculum uses a developmental teaching model where students are introduced to increasingly complex skills one step at a time.

**STEP 3: Connecting**
The target was generally identified in Step 1: self-assessment. In Step 2 the target was refined and located with the help of local advisors. The last stage involves connecting to one's target. Now it is time to set goals and make detailed plans for achieving those goals. In the process, the student has not only learned information but has also become a *known* person. This is extremely important for job seekers when one recalls the common wisdom of job search experts: jobs do not go to the best qualified person, they go the the best known person. In other words, only by penetrating social networks, by becoming known do we penetrate the hidden opportunities.

The leisure search is simpler and does not end with a single event like employment. McDaniels stresses the importance of a leisure search when he writes, "in leisure young people explore their talents not knowing where they will lead." The leisure search is a life long program, but the course will terminate. The program ends when the student can demonstrate detailed knowledge about a new leisure pathway. This may take the form of answering the program's 7 basic questions (which are listed next).

1. WHERE CAN I ENJOY THIS LEISURE EXPERIENCE?
2. HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO LEARN?
3. WHAT CLASSES CAN I TAKE? WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO JOIN?
4. WHAT GROUP COULD I JOIN TO LEARN MORE?
5. HOW MUCH MIGHT I SPEND ON THIS LEISURE EXPERIENCE?
6. HOW MUCH TIME MIGHT I SPEND DOING THIS EACH WEEK?
7. WHAT WILL BE MY TRAVEL NEEDS FOR THIS LEISURE EXPERIENCE?

With this information the student can then lay out long and short term goals. To reach these goals the student uses a worksheet to make a detailed plans.

For example, consider the person who wants to go into motorcycle racing. The plans might include starting a class on small engine repair, joining a motorcycle class, and then reading some magazines about motorcycle racing. It could also involve plans to get a job to earn money needed for a hobby. Another student might try to do volunteer work for a moto-cross club in exchange for dues. Another student might seek advice from motorcycle dealers. This stage re-uses many of previously learned skills about decision making and information gathering.

The job seeker's hunt is more competitive. He/She must learn how to interview, fill out an application, and ways to handle rejection. The students learns that the average job seeker will hear 15-20 "no's" before ever getting an invitation to an interview (Kimeldorf, 1985). The job seeker learns that unless he/she is collecting "No's" then the job of job-hunting isn't being fully executed. Tom Jackson says that the average job search looks like this:

No, No, No, No, No, No, No, No, No, No, No, No, No,
No, No, No, No, No, No, No, No, No, No, No, No, No,
No, No, No, No, No, No, No, No, No, No, No, Yes

We therefore acknowledge the experience of rejection and reinforce those students who persist. *My Job Search Effort Box* card adapts a famous passage by Tom Jackson The card is shown next. Each time a job seeker gets rejected a *circled No* is blackened out.

The *yes, no* and *maybe* experiences are discussed in a support group atmosphere.

Success in the job search is also dependent upon persistence and follow-up. These qualities can be taught when students learn to plan their job search each day. This emphasis on planning and accountability helps to stress self-directed job search behaviors. The strategy is to leave the last two weeks free of instruction. In the last two weeks the students will meet in a planning and support group mode. They begin each day by filling out a complete *Daily Job Search Plan Sheet.* They list their goals for the current day and tell what they actually accomplished on the previous day. A sample Daily Job Search Plan Sheet is shown next:

*DAILY JOB SEARCH PLAN SHEET SAMPLE*

| Who and Where | Phone Number And Contact | Critical Date or Time | Notes About What To Do Next |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Business Name<br>_____<br>Address<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____ | Phone<br>_____<br>Contact Name<br>_____<br>_____ | _____<br>date<br>_____<br>time<br>_____ | __ Fill out application<br>__ Find out about employer<br>__ Call Back<br>__ Interview __ Visit<br>__ Get Directions<br>__ Write Letter/Thank You |
| 2. Business Name<br>_____<br>Address<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____ | Phone<br>_____<br>Contact Name<br>_____<br>_____ | _____<br>date<br>_____<br>time<br>_____ | __ Fill out application<br>__ Find out about employer<br>__ Call Back<br>__ Interview __ Visit<br>__ Get Directions<br>__ Write Letter/Thank You |

**Why Self-Directed Hunting Is Essential**

This curriculum sets out to teach students to become self-directed job and leisure hunters. Self-directed behavior is a major program goal. Students are taught how to find information in a systematic and persistent fashion. This goal cannot be over-emphasized because often our greatest unhappiness results from haphazard or random job and leisure hunting.

Robert Wegmann, a national job search expert, states that haphazard hunters remain unemployed longer (1985). This is due to several factors associated with haphazard styles of hunting. First these type of hunters lack a general hunting strategy. As a result, these hunters often travel in circles searching for answers. They quit after the first few rejections or obstacles, taking the first solution that comes along. I hypothesize that as a result of settling for less, these haphazard hunters enjoy less work and leisure satisfaction. Another way of saying this, is that self-directed information hunters are the ones who find the hidden opportunities. Being able to find the hidden options increases one's chance for finding satisfaction.

To back up this hypothesis one can look at the general unhappiness found in the leisure and work world. In a typical work world survey of one finds statistics like :

52% of employees find their work unsatisfying
50% of the employees will change jobs in 5 years
30% of the employees think their job is bad for their health. (Bolles. 1981).

The same applies to leisure life style questions. According to Dr. McDowell in *Leisure Wellness* only 55% of those surveyed found their leisure satisfying. It becomes even more startling when contemplating the ultimate leisure question we all face upon retirement. According to Bolles , the Social Security office reports that those people who retire without plans receive an average of 13 Social Security Checks and 7 out of 10 die within 2 years (1981)!

An example from job finding can further illustrate the unhappiness resulting from haphazard hunting. Most job seekers (50%) will look in the want ads. When the want ads are used as a major or exclusive source the job seeker is committing him/herself to the minor leagues because want ads typically list only 5-12% of the available openings on any given day (Wegmann.1985). Job seekers who rely on less effective methods often experience excessive failure and rejection. Often this leads to withdrawal from full time job seeking. The job hunter ends up spending only 1-4 hours a week plugging into the rejection syndrome: the job hunt. In an information age the major survival skill is not getting information, but getting to the right information or knowing the best way to collect information.

**New Conditions and New Attitudes**

Many students of labor market trends argue how changes in the work place create new attitudes towards work and leisure. Changing attitudes and changing conditions work upon each other in a synergistic fashion. First, one must realize that the changing conditions in the work place are fundamentally negative when seen in terms of career opportunities. There is a basic decline in what I call the 3 S's: Security, Salary, and Satisfaction. The last has been illustrated and the first two need only a few statistical footnotes.

It is widely recognized today that the growth of the service industries has dominated the labor market. This enigmatic service sector is dominated by low paid, routine jobs. Typically workers in the service sector earn $5000 a year less than those in the declining manufacturing sector. It is not just the blue collar worker who falls victim to these changes. Mid-management opportunities are also declining. In the late 70's and early 80's major corporations began cutting mid-management by 40%. Job security faded as the average American worker turned over 10.5 jobs in his work life (Wegmann.1985).

Many sociologists have also noted the negative effects of high tech. First, there is the absolute loss of jobs. We replace a typist, typesetter, and paste-up artist with a single position called desktop publicist. Then, there is the de-skilling of the work force which occurs ironically at the same time that our labor force has reached it's highest level of education. In 1970 one employee in 7 had a college degree, but in 1980 it had become 1 in 4! At the same time the number of jobs that require an advanced degree seems limited. Bolles writes that only 1/3 of the jobs in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles requires a credential or degree. This may explain why most surveys on job satisfaction show that 80% of the Americans feel they are under-employed (or working at jobs that do not use their skills and education to the fullest) (1981).

Over 40 years ago Johnson O'Connor tried to address this mis-match between aptitudes and job demands. Mr. O'Connor felt that the average person possessed between 3-6 innate talents or aptitudes. However, he felt that the average job used only one of our aptitudes at most. He prophetically wrote:

> *The aptitudes we have and don't use are the source of greatest frustration and restlessness....these unused aptitudes constantly cry out for an outlet...for development"* (Waitley. 1977)

The problem remains because the labor market is offering up even less opportunity for fulfillment today. Or simply put, a good (challenging or creative) job is really, really hard to find...while average to crummy jobs abound.

**A New, Balanced Leisure and Work Ethic**

These changed conditions have created new attitudes towards work and leisure. They have forced people to look in new directions for life fulfillment and satisfaction. These changed conditions have created the fertile grounds for a renewal of a new leisure ethic. The work ethic must now share the limelight with an emerging leisure ethic.

This may possibly result in a more balanced outlook as we shift from a strong protestant work ethic, back towards the Athenian ideal. Greeks believed that the ideal conditions for expanding mind, body and spirit were not found in work, but rather in the involvement in one's leisure pursuits. The Greeks believed that we fulfilled our truest potential only during leisure involvement. This sentiment may have major appeal in the next century as the population ages. This age and leisure connection is summed up nicely in the paraphrase of George Bernard Shaw's works:

> *We do not cease to play because we grow old. We grow old because we cease to play .* (McDowell.1983)

**21st Century Agenda**

The next century is almost upon us. Surely in the 90's, we will begin to paint a new horizon of possibilities with words like "renaissance, renewal, or re-birth." It is a huge cultural leap from 2000 BC to 2000 AD. Contemplating the next 4000 years leaves the imagination breathless.

We began as hunters and gatherers in a jungle. Today we live in a new jungle of information. We have traded the bow for the telephone and the spear for the keyboard. The tools have changed but not the rules. We must re-define what constitutes a basic education. We must re-define the 3 R's or basic skills. Unfortunately, the current educational reform movement and back-to-basic focus is looking to the past and not the future. The current reform strategy simple increases graduation requirements and restricts our educational mission to the narrow path of the 3 Rs.

Teaching basic grammar is hardly innovative in an age when word processors come with spell checkers, and keyboards are being replaced by voice activated screens. In the not-to-distant future, we will probably see intelligent software that teaches one how to write, edit, and design page lay-out. Teaching basic math facts is hardly innovative in an age of automated cash registers, laser bar code readers, and automatic bank tellers.

We need a new description of the 3 R's. Future looking educators know that we need a new vocabulary, new vision. Basic skills need to be described in terms of information gathering skills. These skills can become community based problem solving skills for 21st century.[2] The new 3 R's must be based on life style needs in an information processing society. By re-defining the basics we will make schooling-for-life a more appealing proposition. Education will again become interesting and linked to the real, day-to-day life of our community and world. The word *relevance* may re-emerge in our educational dialogues. When curriculum is tied to the exhilaration of exploration, education may again seem like an exciting and worthwhile venture...needing no further justification or defense.

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[2]One new concept to be explored is the replacement of the traditional career center with an expanded and updated model which I call an *Opportuntiies Center*. I have outlined this model in another essay called: Opportunties Center, Concept Paper.

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